Defining Performance Metrics for the Long-Term Experimental and Management Plan

Technical Work Group Meeting
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Project Overview (Purpose and Need)

- LTEMP defines 11 Goals
  - How do we know if Goals are being achieved?
  - Need to define performance metrics

- Section 6.1(c) of the LTEMP ROD*
  "The DOI, in consultation with the AMWG, will develop monitoring metrics for the goals and objectives using those in Appendix C as a starting point."
  (Note: Appendix C = performance metrics developed by Runge et al. (2016) to help select the preferred LTEMP alternative.)

- FY 21-23 TWP, Reclamation Project C.12

Monitoring & Metrics

Monitoring & metrics serve a variety of purposes. Principal types and reasons for monitoring include:

- **Effectiveness (or Performance) Monitoring**
  1. To assess effectiveness of policy, plan, or legislation
  2. To evaluate progress towards achieving management objectives or regulatory standards

- **Surveillance Monitoring**
  3. To detect incipient trends ("early warnings")
  4. To determine resource status in order to decide appropriate management actions

- **Validation Monitoring**
  5. To increase our understanding of resource dynamics
  6. To develop and refine models or predictions
This Project

- Focus is on defining metrics for assessing and tracking achievement of LTEMP Goal outcomes
  - metrics for other objectives & purposes to be defined later
- Focus is on defining metrics for Effectiveness Monitoring (“Phase 1”)
  - “To assess effectiveness of policy . . .” and
  - “track progress towards achieving management objectives . . .”
- Performance metrics tell us “achieving / achieved” or “not achieved” -- but not necessarily why
- This will NOT be a comprehensive Monitoring Plan!
Multiple External Factors Affect LTEMP Goal Outcomes

Socio-ecological drivers of CRe conditions

- Climate
  - Reservoir volume & elevation
  - QW: temp, nutrients, alkalinity, turbidity
- External Terrestrial (tributary) Inputs:
  - Geologic substrate, sediment, nutrients, organics, pollutants

Human pop & energy demands
- Cultural values
- 1922 Compact
- Existing Hydropower Contracts
- Hydropower Generation

Dam Operations: Volume, velocity, height/magnitude, seasonality, frequency/pattern of fluctuations

Predam Conditions

Aquatic Environment/Habitat
- Fish
  - Natives
  - Introduced
- Benthic veg
- Bugs, Fish food
  - Natives
  - Introduced

Non-humans
- Insects
- Birds
- Reptiles
- Mammals

Humans
- Camps, Rec Q, Archeo
- Natives
- Introduced

Terrestrial Environment/Habitat
- Plants
- OHWZ
- Riparian

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LTEMP Performance Metrics: Criteria

- Reflects the expected performance **outcome** of each LTEMP goal (or measures a performance outcome triggering a legal compliance action or experiment)
- Quantifiable (metric = measurable)
- Technically & financially feasible to measure
- Relevant to the metrics used to select LTEMP preferred alternative
Metrics design & selection

Some basic tenets of metrics design and selection include:

- Prioritize quality of metrics over quantity
- Design metrics that are easy to understand
- Design metrics that are easy to compare
Metric Description Format

Goal X Statement

Background (sets stage and rational for selecting specific metrics)

Conceptual diagram (shows “means variables” & “ecological drivers”)

Metric X.1 (Metric Name)

• Metric Type: direct observation/measurement, estimate based on model, etc.
• Relevant Criteria: Describe how it relates to the established criteria for metrics
• Data required: Data required to produce the metric
• Metric calculation: How metric will be calculated
• Frequency: How often will the metric be measured?
• Presentation: How will the metric be presented (graphically; example provided)
• Interpretation: How will metric be interpreted (historic range, trend, thresholds?)
• Limitations and uncertainties of the metric
**Draft Metrics, Goal 2**

- **Goal 2 – Natural Processes**
  
  Restore, to the extent practicable, ecological patterns and processes within their range of natural variability, including the natural abundance, diversity, and genetic and ecological integrity of the plant and animal species native to those ecosystems.

- 2.1 Seasonal Timing of River Flow
- 2.2 Sub-daily fluctuation in River Flow
- 2.3 Springtime Gross Primary Productivity
- 2.4 Percent EPT
Draft Metrics, Goal 3

- Goal 3- Humpback Chub
  Meet humpback chub recovery goals, including maintaining a self-sustaining population, spawning habitat, and aggregations in the Colorado River and its tributaries below the Glen Canyon Dam

  - 3.1 Current tier of HBC in LCR aggregation
  - 3.2 Grand Canyon-wide HBC abundance
  - 3.3 Proportion of Grand Canyon ecosystem with evidence of all 3 life stages
Draft Metrics, continued

- **Goal 5 – Other Native Fishes**
  Maintain self-sustaining native fish species populations and their habitats in their natural ranges on the Co. River and its tributaries
  - 5.1 - 5.3: Proportion of the Grand Canyon ecosystem with evidence of all 3 life stages of bluehead sucker (5.1), flannel mouth sucker (5.2), razorback sucker (5.3)
  - 5.4 Proportion of GCE with speckled dace (any life stage)
  - 5.5 Proportion of GCE with extirpated species (any life stage)

- **Goal 9 – Rainbow Trout**
  Achieve a healthy high-quality recreational rainbow trout fishery in GCNRA and reduce or eliminate downstream trout migration consistent with NPS fish management and ESA compliance
  - 9.1 Trout Angler Catch Rate
  - 9.2 Rainbow Trout Abundance
Draft Metrics, continued

- **Goal 4 – Hydropower**
  Maintain or increase Glen Canyon Dam electric energy generation, load following capability, and ramp rate capability, and minimize emissions and costs to the greatest extent practicable, consistent with improvement and long-term sustainability of downstream resources

  4.1 – Economic Value of Hydropower

- **Goal 6 – Recreation**
  Maintain and improve the quality of recreational experiences for the users of the Colorado River Ecosystem. Recreation includes, but is not limited to, flatwater and whitewater boating, river corridor camping, and angling in Glen Canyon

  6.1 – Economic Value of Recreation Experience
Draft Metrics, continued

- **Goal 10 – Non-native aquatic species**
  Minimize or reduce the presence and expansion of aquatic nonnative invasives.
  - 10.1 - 10.4: Average number of risky species per habitat segment in GCE
  - 10.5 - 10.8: Average number of risky species per habitat segment in GCE
    - 10.1, 10.5 = Low risk species
    - 10.2, 10.6 = medium risk species
    - 10.3, 10.7 = high risk
    - 10.4, 10.8 = very high
Draft Metrics, continued

- **Goal 11 – Riparian vegetation**

  Maintain native vegetation and wildlife habitat, in various stages of maturity, such that they are diverse, healthy, productive, self-sustaining, and ecologically appropriate

  - 11.1 Total plant cover
  - 11.2 Native plant richness
  - 11.3 Native to non-native plant species cover ratio
Goals/Metrics still under discussion

1. **Archaeological and Cultural Resources.** Maintain the integrity of potentially affected NRHP-eligible or listed historic properties in place, where possible, with preservation methods employed on a site-specific basis.
   - Agreement on 3 metrics; discussing need for 4th one

7. **Sediment.** Increase and retain fine sediment volume, area, and distribution in the Glen, Marble, and Grand Canyon reaches above the elevation of the average base flow for ecological, cultural, and recreational purposes.
   - Agreement on 2 metrics; discussing need for 3 others

8. **Tribal Resources.** Maintain the diverse values and resources of traditionally associated Tribes along the Colorado River corridor through Glen, Marble, and Grand Canyons.
Next Steps

- **Today:** Provide input on draft metrics (descriptions - format, content, interpretability, graphical presentations, interpretability, etc.)

- **June 16-30, 2022:** TWG members review draft report; submit written comments NLT 6/30

- **July-August 2022:** Complete discussions re: metrics for Goals 1, 7, & 8; GCMRC revises and finalizes draft metrics for other LTEMP goals

- **September 2022:** final draft metric descriptions (all goals); present to TWG October 2022
Questions?